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10 March 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: General Reynolds

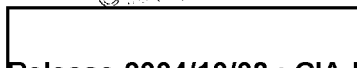
SUBJECT : Self-criticism in March 1967

I have been somewhat concerned, as have you, about the current and future role of the DCI China Coordinator, and thought it might be worthwhile to put some of these concerns and thoughts to paper.

The China Coordinator position was created about two years ago to provide an initial emphasis to the various USIB agencies for intensified work on the China problem and to monitor these efforts for the DCI. In addition, the China Coordinator was to advise the Director on various aspects of the future direction of the intelligence efforts against China, and assist the DCI in carrying out his responsibilities insofar as they relate to Communist China. Thus, the China Coordinator, by definition, is a creature of the Director of Central Intelligence and is unique in the community as a specific means for the Director to direct intelligence activities within the China problem. He has no such means in any other problem. Economic and scientific problems, missiles and atomic energy, the processing problems, collection systems are "coordinated" by USIB committee, and have no direct DCI input. On the other hand, the China Coordinator has no formal USIB standing and operates in the shadow of the DCI, suffering the same inter-agency operational management problems as does the DCI.

Although there have been some significant increases in our overall China effort, some of which can be attributed to the emphasis provided by the DCI China Coordinator, the priority accorded to the China problem is still taken less seriously than USIB had intended, and generally people considered the problem to be one which is still a number of years off insofar as its strategic threat to the U.S. The principal intelligence concerns which we highlighted in our 1964 study appear to be the same problems we face today and, with some

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modification, the discussions and recommendations we outlined at that time are still valid. The individual agencies are trying to answer current production requirements as well as they can, but, as in 1964, they still work with serious conflicts in priorities, and they find it difficult to carry on contingency planning and planning for creation of a strategic resource reserve on the emerging national intelligence problem of China. (Even the China Coordinator has had serious conflicts in the time he can devote to the China problem.) I'm not sure I would argue that the DCI China Coordinator is necessarily a full-time job, but the terms of reference the DCI signed certainly indicate that he expected the China Coordinator to answer to him for progress, or lack of it, in our ability to provide necessary intelligence on China. I get worried at times, when I note the slow pace of things, that the China Coordinator may be the one drawn to account.

There seems to me to be several things the China Coordinator should do to move his China problem along a positive curve. (You, I'm sure, have thought of most of these points and probably have in your list a number of others; perhaps one or two of these are new, however.)

One area that must be improved is the communication between the DCI and his China Coordinator. I do not mean by this that we should start submitting formal reports on a more routine schedule. I do mean that the DCI should think about the China Coordinator when he thinks about China, and that the China Coordinator should be able to discuss China matters informally with the DCI.

Turning this communications problem around a bit, communications between the China Coordinator and the various agencies must be improved. I think that the "gad-flying" I have done at the working-levels has been moderately effective, but the effort should be more systematized. In addition, the China Coordinator should regularize contacts with the Group principals, and in certain cases with other senior China, or management officials, e.g., in DIA, General Carroll, and in State, Mr. Bundy. We have spoken several times about making the Coordinator Group a more meaningful forum for discussing overall intelligence problems. The present make up of the Group makes it difficult to use the Group to think through a problem in free and easy discussion and to arrive at alternative

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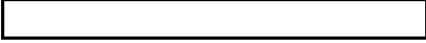
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conclusions and possible means to move the problem toward solution. There is no easy answer to how to change this, but we should start seriously working at it. A good start would be to regularize Group meetings once a month, with an agenda announced ahead of time so that "experts" could be brought along. In addition, there should be a meeting with the Coordinator by each agency once a month to report activities, problems, plans of that agency on China. If I'm doing my job adequately, the China Coordinator should be well briefed on what to look into with each agency. What has to be done though is develop clearly to each agency that the China Coordinator is the Senior China intelligence authority--and not just another senior monitor to keep out of their hair.

One last point: For the most part the line agencies are concerned with handling current problems and many of the longer-term China-related problems, such as were discussed in the 1964 report, do not receive the attention the China Coordinator--looking at the overall long-haul requirements--might feel they deserve. These kinds of problems the China Coordinator should take on as a personal responsibility. What kinds of problems??? For example, overhead photography will be an increasingly important source of information on China. The improved collection systems will be able to provide detailed coverage of the entire country at least monthly. The China Coordinator should assure that the proper emphasis is given to develop necessary processing and analysis programs for this material.

The Special Intelligence Graphic program is a Model T exercise in providing a basis for routine and systematic review of activities covering the whole of China. There should be developing concurrently with our production of this first generation map representation a series of follow-on programs and/or devices for regular scanning and up-dating the "data base" and for alerting us to areas needing further analysis.

Another example: Clearly the most critical collection problem in China is our ability to obtain information from the highest planning and policy levels. It may be argued that this problem is no different than that which we have similarly in places like the Soviet Union,  or other countries in which we have some

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sort of strategic interest. However, our ability to understand the background and staffing process in China is much more significant than in most other areas because the Chinese think so differently than do we. In order to obtain information needed in this area will require an extremely sophisticated clandestine effort, including the development of collection devices and interrogation systems which are beyond the current state-of-the-art. The clandestine services are doing work in this field, but the China Coordinator should assure that appropriate manpower and funds are budgeted.

A final example, and again one we have talked about often: Even the more optimistic projections indicate that the kinds of information we will be getting on China will be fragmentary, incomplete, and irregular, so that it is most important that we develop a program for career management of our valuable analyst resource. This is the nation's problem, and the China Coordinator's.

These remarks are mostly thinking out loud, and are intended as much as anything to provide a spring board for further discussion.



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